Customising your module design

Overview

This guide describes some of the basic module design settings (menu colour, theme, banner, etc.) available through the **Customisation** submenu in the **Control Panel** so that you can:

- change the design and colour scheme of the module menu (upper menu at the side of the page)
- choose a simple design theme for the module
- add a module banner image to your course entry point page
- change the module entry point (first page the student sees).

(If you want to change the structure of your module – adding content areas and so on please see the 'How to' guide **Customise your module structure**.)

Select a design theme

VITAL has some ready-made background design themes that you can pick for your module. Some Schools and Departments have chosen a theme to apply to all modules for a consistent look and feel.

There are two places from where you can select and apply a theme. The quickest is in the upper right of your module menu. Click the colour quarter icon to open a dropdown list and try out some different themes. They are instantly applied when you select one.
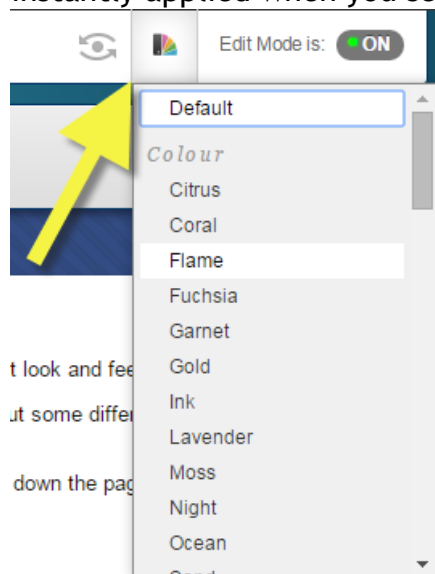
The other way, and where you can view all of the themes before you select one is from the **Control Panel**, opening the **Customisation** section and then selecting **Teaching Style**. Scroll down the page to the **SELECT COURSE THEME** area. Use the scroll bar highlighted here to look through the different designs available. You can select one and click **Submit** to apply it to your module.


Change module menu colour scheme and style

1. You can customise the module menu colour scheme to suit your design theme. From the **Control Panel** open the **Customisation** menu. Select **Teaching Styles** and scroll down the page that appears to the **SELECT MENU STYLE** area.

2. Use the colour picker highlighted in this screenshot to change the background and text colours. Make sure you choose high-contrast colours to ensure your module menu remains readable to all.
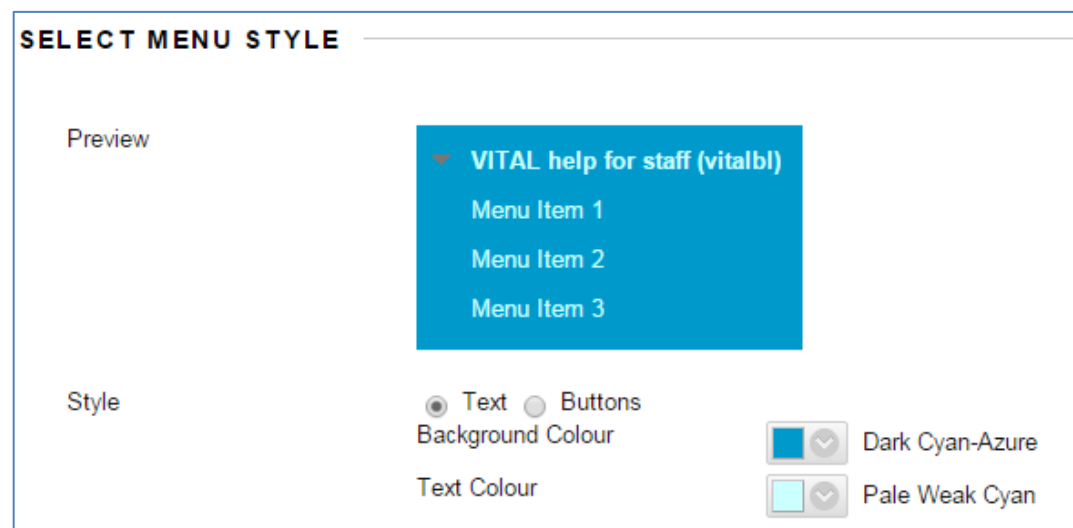
3. You will spot that there is a **Buttons** option for your module menu as well. These buttons are not recommended for use as many of them have very poor backdrops and render menu text illegible. You cannot change the text colour for buttons, these are preset, and many of the patterned

buttons have poor text/pattern contrast – exercise caution! Buttons also have a limited number of characters allowed and do not support text wrapping. This screenshot shows some example button styles and their drawbacks!
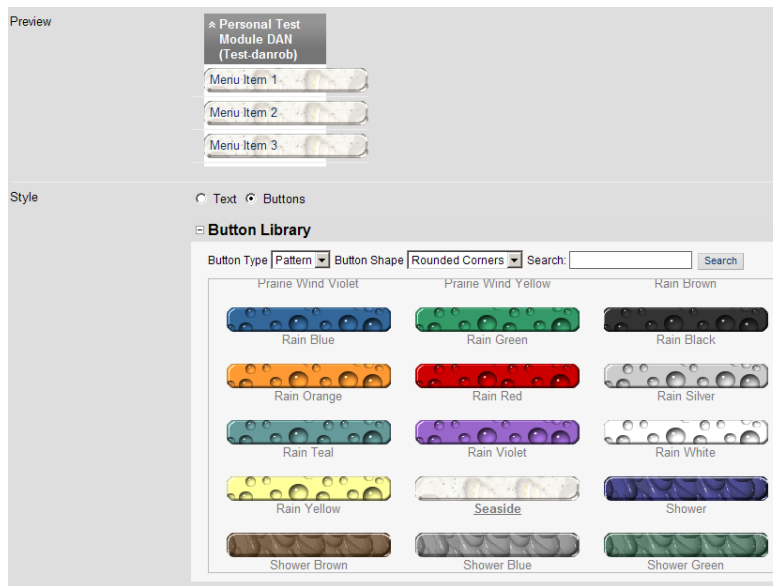
4. If you want to apply the changes you have made to the module menu style then click **Submit**. Press the **Cancel** button if you do not.

Add a banner image to module entry-point page

You will first need a banner image to upload to your module. You can make a simple one using PowerPoint (see the steps at the end of this guide). The image is best sized between 400 and 700 (width) x up to 150 (height) pixels in size. You can experiment with these sizes. It is best saved as a JPG or GIF file. The banner does not automatically resize in the browser.

1. Select the **Teaching Style** link from the **Customisation** menu/page. In the section **SELECT BANNER** contains a **Browse My Computer** button which you use to locate the banner image on your PC. Click **Submit** to confirm your choice.

2. The banner displays at the top of the module entry-point page only **(What's New** page by default) as shown in the example below created with PowerPoint. It will not display on other module pages.
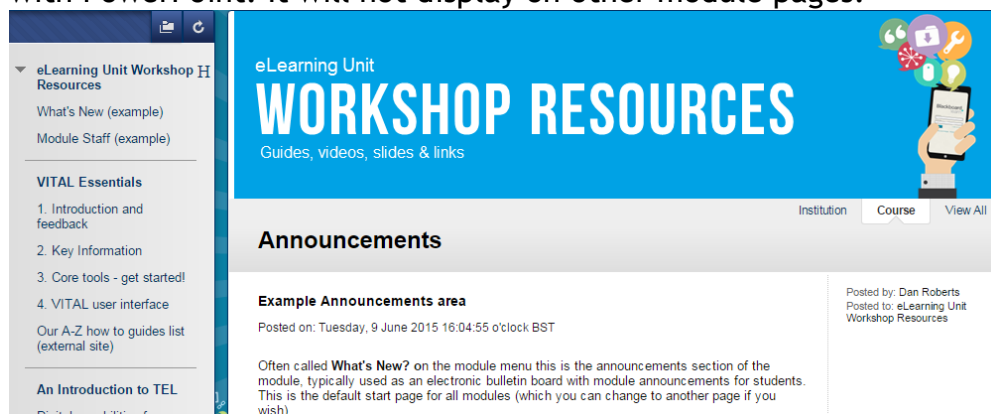
3. If you are not happy with the banner image and want to remove or change it, return to the **Teaching Style** option on the **Customisation** menu, tick the **Delete this banner** option and click **Submit**.

4. If you change the module entry-point page then the banner will display at the top of the new entry-point page.

Change module entry-point page

1. To change which page first displays when the module is accessed, from the **Control Panel** menu, select the **Teaching style** link from the **Customisation** menu. Scroll to the section **SELECT COURSE ENTRY POINT** and from the drop down list here choose which of your module sections will be the new module entry-point. This will be the first page that the student sees when they open this module.
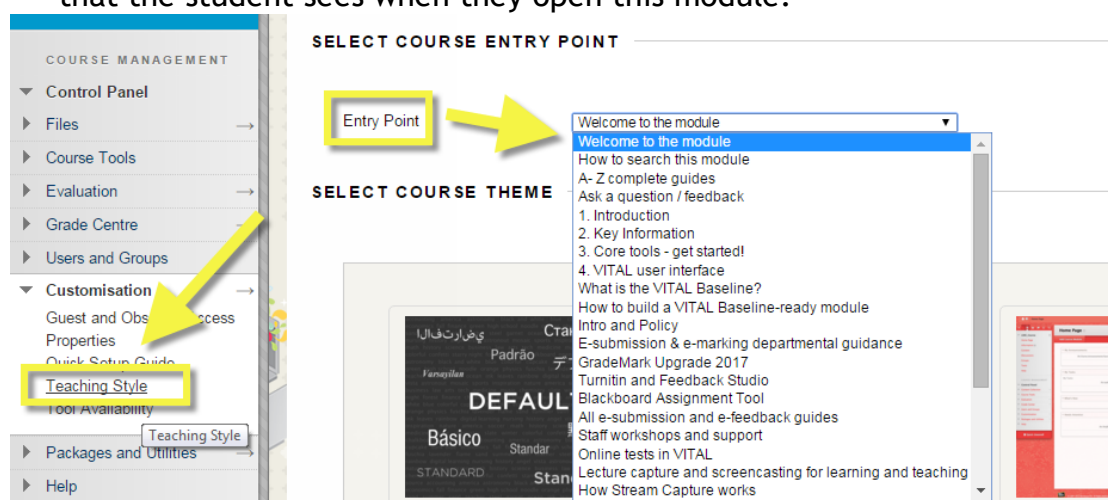
2. Click **Submit** to save your change.

Displaying content item icons and text

Every content item that you make in VITAL has an associated icon that appears next to that item's title in the list of items on a page. You have some control over the way these appear in your module, both as the default for your whole module, or on a folder by folder basis if you prefer, or if you have an occasional change you want to make.

Overall default setting
The default setting in VITAL for the display of content items on the page is to show the content type icon, clickable title link and any descriptive text and multimedia.

5. To change this at the module level for all content from the **Control Panel** menu, select the **Teaching style** link from the **Customisation** menu. Scroll to the section **DEFAULT CONTENT VIEW.**
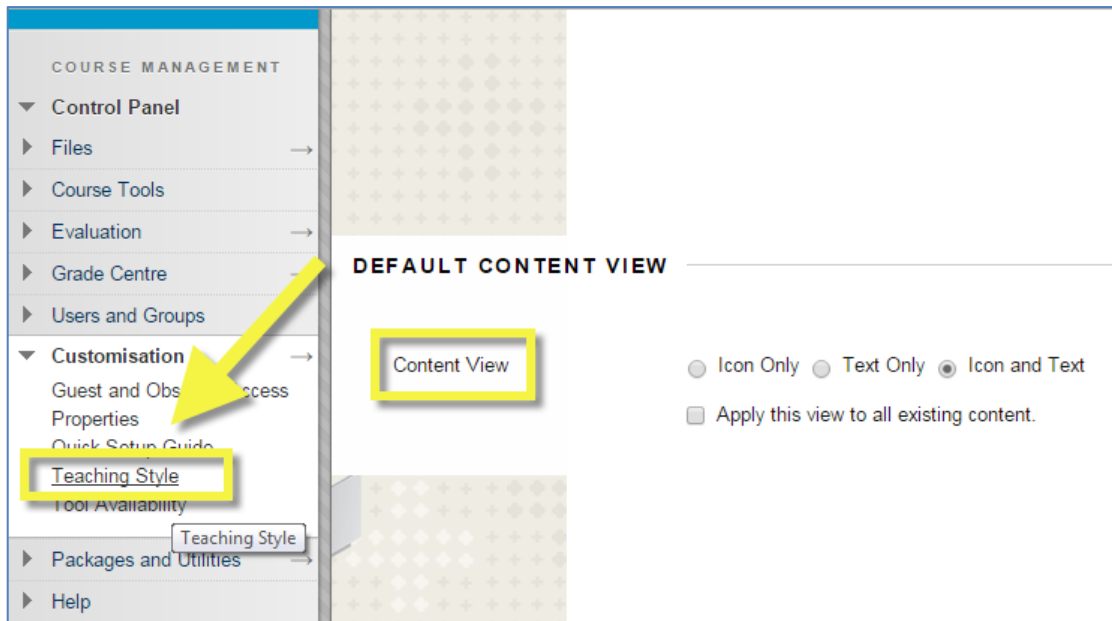
6. You can choose to display:
    - Icon Only - this strips away any descriptive text and turns your items into clickable links consisting of the item title and icon, displayed in two columns on the page.
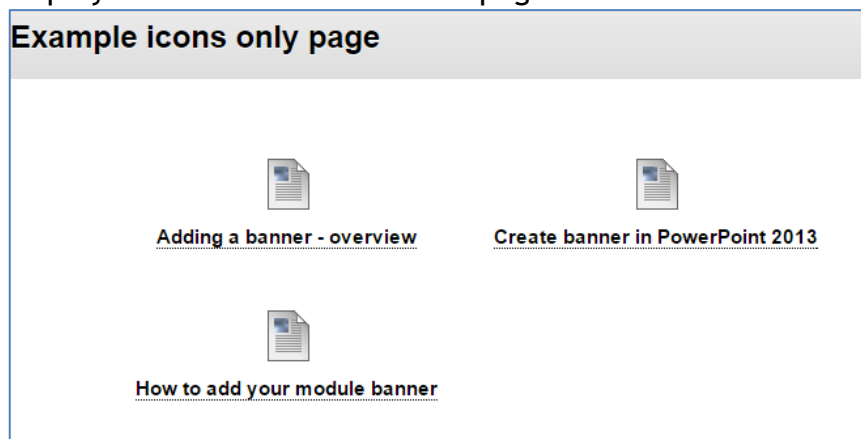

    - Text Only - this removes the icons from the page and leaves the clickable title link and any descriptive text and multimedia.
    - Icon and Text - the default option which shows the item icons, clickable title link and descriptive text and multimedia.

Folder-level appearance

You can also change how icons appear at the individual folder level, which will override for that folder the general setting you have specified.

7. To change the folder-level setting, click into the folder and then hover the mouse pointer by the top-level title for this folder page.

8. On the pop-up menu that appears, select the display option you would prefer.
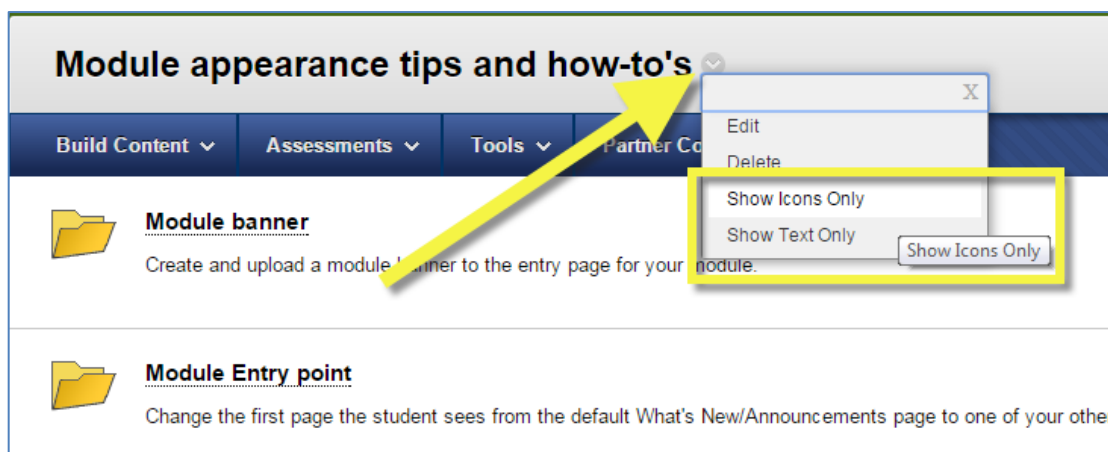
Create a module banner in PowerPoint 2013

This is a simple way of quickly creating a banner for your module.

- Open a new blank presentation. There will be a blank Title slide.
- Change the layout of the Title Slide to the Blank layout.
- Either, right-click on the slide, rollover the Layout option on the pop-up menu and select Blank from the next pop-out menu, OR
- On the Home Tab, click the Layout button, then select Blank from the layout thumbnails.
- On the Design tab, click the Slide Size button and select Custom Slide Size.
- On the pop-up menu that appears, in the Slides sized for dropdown, select Banner. Click OK.
- You'll see a Maximise or Ensure Fit message which you should select on the basis of what image etc you might use for the banner.
- For a simple banner you can select a ready-made style from the Design tab and then on the Insert tab you can select a Text Box to include a short piece of text.
- Otherwise/also you can import an image you want to use from the Insert menu.
- Once you have finished designing your banner, click the File menu tab and choose to Save As... to save your banner as a PowerPoint presentation so you could make changes to it in the future if needed.
- Next save your presentation again as a .png or .jpg file. This file is what you will upload to Blackboard as your banner.
  - o Click the File menu tab and select Save As. At the Save as Type dropdown, select PNG Portable Networks Graphics Format (.png) or JPEG File Interchange Format (.jpg). Click Save.
  - o At the prompt, **Which slides do you want to export** click **Just This One**.